DISCORDER

A guide to CITR fm 102
CABLE 100

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54-40 or Fight

Local band probes the border

Isn't nature wonderful?! How things just seem to evolve, regardless of any extraneous adversity? Nature, the word itself, free of dogmas and any restricting sense of rigidity. 54-40 is a natural band, and with the release of their second record *Set the Fire*, there is a promise to continue on in that tradition. They've certainly come a long way since their debut at the Smilin' Buddha in December of 1980, and with their excellent first release *Selection* selling out of its initial pressing, things are definitely looking good. 54-40 are also an integral part of MO DA MU records, home of Junco Run, the Animal Slaves, the Moral Lepers, and Emily Faryna (someone we'll definitely be hearing from) MO DA MU is a close knit group of people dedicated to getting new and original local music to the public's ear. Both *Selection*, *Set the Fire*, and *Things are Still Coming Ashore*, the compilation on which 54-40 first appeared, are MO DA MU projects. The band has gained quite a reputation on the West Coast of being a very compelling live act. They've played with Wall of Woodoo, Savage Republic, Public Image, and Gang of Four, not to mention the fact that they are a superb headline attraction in their own right. Many a packed hall, club, what have you, has been left calling for more, in the wake of an intense performance by the band whose name consists of two seemingly compatable numbers joined by a hyphen. 54-40 are: Neil Osborne on guitar and lead vocals; Brad Merritt on bass; Phil Comparelli on trumpet, keyboards and guitar; and Darryl Neudorf on drums and percussion. Recently, I had the pleasure of talking to them about the new album, new directions ... and nature ... among other things.

The most obvious question seems to concern the band's name. Why 54-40?

The name comes from an episode in American history. James Polk was a presidential candidate, I believe in the 1840s, and he had a campaign slogan that went "54-40 OR FIGHT!" That meant that he wanted to establish the border between British North America and the U.S. at the 54th parallel on the 40th minute ... or fight! That would have put the border up somewhere around Edmonton. Of course that never materialized but we though that it was a catchy name so we chose it.

Set the Fire was recorded at the ever so legendary Mushroom studios, once host to such inimitable artistic giants as B.T.O. Heart, Loverboy, and many a floundering formula cock-rock band. Surely such a venture must have involved a hundred dollar sacrifice of studio time just to take a pee. How did they do it you ask? Well, having been approached by the band some time ago about purchasing a 54-40 investment bond, I thought an investigation was in order.

Brad: Well, we, like every other band, have very limited resources. We're not signed to a major label and we tend to do things on our own, just by nature, as well as the fact that it's our circumstance. We wanted to do a recording project and we had no means of making the money or spending it in the studio so we though of the idea of soliciting contributions from some of our better friends. It worked out quite well. We had a lot of support from some very good people.

Neil: It was just something we had to do. It was either that or don't record. You get to the point in a band, well we were a year old, and we'd just gotten Phil and Darryl into the thing, and we wanted to make a new record. We didn't have any money so we said get some, and we did.

Many a reviewer still clings to references to Gang of Four, Echo and the Bunnymen, and Joy Division when speaking of 54-40's sound. As their press kit includes such reviews I ask them how they feel about it and whether its wise to perpetuate the matter by including those references in something as crucial as a promotional package. Phil interjected to remind me that somebody had also used a comparison to The Who and one reviewer went so far as to say that they had "... taken the post-Joy Division music style further into jazz-fusion than even Gang of Four." Mutual groans and laughs abound!

Darryl: We all did listen to those bands so there probably is a certain element of truth there in that there were certain things we appreciated about that music we played. It's not like we were copying them or anything like that.

Brad: Some of those reviews are circa Selection and even pre-Selection and I think that at the beginning of this band's *history, we were very much influenced by those bands and it showed in our music. Through Selection and now through our latest album it shows up less and less. We've reached the point, now, where we're more of an influence on each other than any outside musical entity. I think our sound is very true to itself and that we have our own sound.*

A North American sound perhaps?

Brad: Good. We come from North America!

Neil: We're proud of it! You can even zone it. I was talking to someone from Seattle and they were saying that we fit in with a Pacific Northwest sound that's coming out.

Brad: Regional sound.

Neil: This sort of ties in with the first question about 54-40. We're at the border now, right.

Brad: We're kind of natural. We haven't forced anything on ourselves. We're, more or less, a product of our environment and that specifically relates to where we are. We are in North America and we're in Canada and we're on the west coast and we're in the Pacific Northwest and we're on the border.

Before this turns into a geography lesson it might be advisable to digress a bit and talk about the band's live performances. Neil's attitude towards the audience has always been somewhat of a puzzle. He is certainly compelling, as the groups front man, but is he being condescending, treating the audience like babies waiting for their pablum?

Neil: Hmmmm ... Well ... Um ... (long pause) That's a good question! (laughs) Stop the tape! No, that's easy. It's true, I do feel that way. I feel like saying "WAKE UP!!" It's a totally personal thing with the audience. I've been told that a lot of people just don't get it and I can see that. A lot of people out there just don't get what's going on. That's part of the reason for treating people like babies, because sometimes they are and they forget why they're there. We try to express what's the real situation in the environment at the time. It's combined with many other things, with us up there, the way we feel, the way the place is, and just reading the general atmosphere. We feed that back to them and that's what puts people off. They're seeing what's really around them up on stage and they don't want to see that. A lot of people go to a gig to escape, for pure entertainment, for positive inspiration. I'm not saying we're a negative band, but we definitely like to promote the way we see things. None of what we do is ever contrived, it's never predetermined. We did have a very dramatic gig in Seattle where I threw down my guitar and things just went totally haywire, so we decided not to get too carried away, to be more patient with the audience, and that helped.

Brad: It makes us a bit more understandable.

Phil: The people that talk about that are probably from Vancouver and I notice a big difference between audiences in the different cities we play. There's a big difference across the border. A lot of people seem to just enjoy being at a gig watching a band play.

Brad: They're very open. I don't know if it has so much to do with Seattle or San Francisco being different places than Vancouver as much as it is that *we are coming from a different place. They seem to be very open to what we're about and there's not so much pretention either on our part or that of the audience. They don't seem to be there for any other reason than to see a new band. I think that's extremely healthy and quite often you lack that in* Vancouver, *and that, once again, reflects on how we play and how we act onstage.*

Are Vancouver audiences pretentious? Heavens! Say it isn't so!

Neil: No. I think you'll find it's the case, in talking to people in other bands, that a local band gets discriminatory treatment because *they're local bands.*

Some time ago now, when everybody and their dog was doing a benefit for the Vancouver Five defense fund (surely a worthy cause seeing as they haven't a hope of getting a fair trial due to the slanted media blitz and the discrepancies in the case against them), 54-40 received some bad press for seemingly backing out of just such a benefit gig. How do they feel about it now?

Brad: Neil and I had agreed to do the gig before we'd consulted either Phil or Darryl and, as it turned out, that was the wrong thing to do. Darryl had quite a few strong feelings about what was going on and he wanted to find out a little more about it. He did that and found that it wasn't really to his moral satisfaction.

Darryl: It wasn't that it wasn't to my moral satisfaction. I find that when a band plays a benefit, it's different that just playing a gig and you should find out just what you're playing for. I decided to find out what this whole "Free the Five" thing was about so I talked to the spokesperson, talked to her for about an hour, and even-

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Gladys'

"Sitting here in Gladys' pad contemplating the latest fad" ...

The warm, country kitchen appeal of the seventeen seat snack bar at 2137 West fourth avenue, has been a favorite of the Kitsilano crowd for ten years. According to owner Gladys Clough, many of her customers have been coming nearly every day since she opened the doors on Feb. 1, 1974.

Until I had lunch, I wondered why they went at all. The decor is very basic, Chairs that don't match each other or the tables. Plaster crumbling off the walls - nothing about the appearance of this place should attract the city folk, but the food sure does.

All the meals are homemade. Big, juicy burgers, fully loaded with home fries for $4.25. Breakfasts come in two sizes, large and small, both under three bucks. And of course there the B.E.L.T.CH., a Dagwood style sandwich of bacon, egg, lettuce, tomato and cheese for $3.25. All the plates I saw go back to the dishwasher were pretty well cleaned up by the patrons. Good food.

The sign on wall lists fairly limited operating hours, from breakfast until just after suppertime. Here's the secret. They don't advertise it, but they open up again from 10:30 until 3, six nights a week.

If you like low budget, high quality food, drop in on Gladys'. It's casual, (serve yourself, order from the cook) the food is tasty and filling, and the price is right.

Les Davis

Airhead

GREETINGS FELLOW BALLOONS

As Discorder enters its second year of publication, this space continues to exist, much to the chagrin and delight of you the reader - the agony and the exstasy of Airhead. Personally, I'm ecstatic that I won't have to agonize over how to fill this column with words, cuz we've got lots to talk about.

THE AGONY ...

Messrs. Robertson and Badanic contorted themselves when informed via post that they'd neglected to mention the appearance of James• White and the Blacks at Luv a Fair March 24 in their 1983 Retrospective in the January Discorder. But that's not the worst of it. All hell bound boogie boy broke loose when Gassed brought to our horrified attention that the aforementioned headcheese(s) had also forgotten all about the 1983 Hot Air (head) Show. Who could possibly forget the confrontation between Neal Hall and Brad Kent of Ground Zero. A lot of innocent beers and mixed drinks lost their lives. A moment of silence for wasted booze ...

... IS THE ECSTASY

What's loud and obnoxious and sounds like Lawrence Welk on speed? CITR!" I can't take credit for these bon mots, however. This apt description ofCITR was dreamed up by the Science Undergraduate Society of UBC and appeared in their "pat-on-the-back" award winning publication "The Black Plague." I like it. But I was just wondering how they could pay such a compliment to "a radio station that nobody listens to ..."? I smell faulty logic. I guess creativity and logic were never meant to sleep in the same bed - at least not at UBC. Too bad. You scientific shakers of tomorrow should get out of the lab a bit more. It must be getting kinda stuffy in there. What do you think? Write in and let me know. The address is:

CITR
6138 SUB Blvd.
Vancouver
V6T 2A5

I know what you're thinking: "This is just another thinly veiled scheme by that oxy skull to try to get people to write letters." You're damned right it is, cuz if you don't ... well, I'll think of something.

54-4 CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

tually it ended up with her getting quite mouthy. I didn't agree with it but I didn't disagree with it so I couldn't make a definite decision. It was kind of unfortunate because there was a paper that said I'd refused because my father is a right-wing politician, which had nothing to do with it.

Phil: Especially seeing as his father is a schoolteacher!

Brad: You should feel quite strongly for the cause because not only is it the money you're sacrificing, which usually doesn't amount to much anyway, but its the band's name and the band's integrity.

Neil: It's your signature on the thing.

Brad: Right. Because we couldn't be consistent about it we had to withdraw. It was a very unfortunate thing.

Neil: The standpoint of the band, which is far more important as a band, is that if any individual, from a moral standpoint, can't agree to do something like that, then we'll stand behind that person before we will make that person support a cause that he can't bring himself to agree with.

Phil: Because of the lack of communication we sort of ended up halfway, and our signature got put on it however you want to look at it.

Brad: We've suffered the consequences, there's no question about that. It's a mistake we won't make again and I think we're better for it.

We continued on the topic and concluded that it was a classic example of "You're damned if you do and you're damned if you don't!" They came under a lot of fire from some people that just couldn't handle a band's coming to terms with the politics of the individual, a theme that continued ...

Neil: It's important that we get onto the topic of politics. You've got to keep an open mind, you've got to respect peoples opinions, whatever they may be. I respect the right as much as the left and vice versa. It comes down to one person. On either side you're going to find a jerk and you're going to find a nice guy. Our politics lie above that. Our politics are more to do with the individual and how he is really a screwed-up person, yet he doesn't walk into walls that much. He knows where the door is and he knows how to get through it.

But surely a song like *Yank* is directed towards our friends to the south?

Brad: We talked about that when we wrote the song and when Neil wrote the lyrics. There are three very simple lines to the song and the title is spelled with a small "y" so it's not like a proper noun. Therefore yank means pull, or something to that effect, and that's where the meaning lies.

Neil: Definitely. The intention was, with the small "y", meaning to yank or pull, but part of the philosophy is, yes, the implication of America and let them think of it what they will. That is what a lot of our lyrics are about, to take and think of them what you will.

As it turns out, Yank is indeed spelled with a capital "Y". Perhaps they should take this matter up with their typesetter! Record covers never lie!

The cover of the new disc shows the band members lounging about in the burnt out wreckage of some unidentifiable structure, perhaps a house. Rather a strong image, this, and one that may be misconstrued, or stir up the wrong feelings in people.

Neil: It's sort of a statement. A lot of things are implied, and I like that. I structure the words so that, depending on my state of mind, I can assume a certain meaning, certain moods to the words. "Set the Fire" can be a spark, and let's get it going. I can mean what is seen by the light of the fire, therefore it is important to first set the fire, say stop, think, look at yourself. Then you can start the fire and see what's there after it's burned, what the ashes leave.

Brad: Fire is a nice symbol. The lyrics are on the personal side and I think that it pertains more to people setting the spark, setting the fire within themselves.

What does the band think about the new status quo of pop music that seems to be strangling those who would dare to do something out of step with the trendy, so called "alternative" music scene?

Brad: The status quo does exist, the "new" British new wave beat type of stuff. You're always going to get that. As music goes on there will always be a certain type of music that is the status quo. Sometimes a format becomes very polarized and each radio station only plays a certain type of music. CITR fits into that. They play like an alternative top 40 almost, it's so stylized. To a certain extent we fit into that and to a greater extent we have nothing to do with it. It's not an overt influence on us and we're certainly not a part of it.

Phil: What's it got to say for an "original" band if its all got that same beat?

Brad: What's at work with a lot of these bands is that the desire to "make it" burns so intensely within them that they get caught up in what is popular, what is commercial, and what is acceptable to American ears. It becomes a big disco hit and it gets played on all the radio stations. We're not a part of that, we are in our own little groove and we can flow in it and around it.

Well what about the existence of the "54-40" sound?

Brad: That gets back to it being a natural thing, its evolved naturally. We don't force ourselves to sound like ourselves. I think it's right for an audience to expect something that's original and true to itself.

Phil: It's not a formula. If it is it's a natural formula.

Brad: We were talking about that a while ago. For all we know, the next record may be of just violins and glockenspiel. We're a rock band but you just never know.

And that's the final word on 54-40. It's natural, and you just never know.

Mark Mushet

Moses from Hell

The Gun Club preaches; S. Johal listens

In the Cramp-ed dressing room at the Commodore Ballroom sits Kid Congo Powers. Dressed in trademark black with red lipstick, he's lean but not mean - it turns out he's quite a nice guy. To his left is original Gun Club drummer Terry Graham. Opposite them sits a blob-like figure, complete with red sweaty face, watery eyes and lank hair. He's the Gun Club's founding member and sole (soul?) inspiration, Jeffrey Lee Pierce, and he has a fever. He's taking drugs for it though. Qualuudes and run, I think.

His passion for chemicals and firewater, along with his volatile temperament are well known and often suggested as reasons for the on-off existence of the band. Since 'Fire of Love', the great debut album of 1981, Jeffrey Lee Pierce has thrown out and been abandoned by a host of band members, including Ward Dotson (guitar), Jim Duckworth (ex-Panther Burns, guitar) and Dee Pop (ex-Bush Tetras, drums). He didn't like current bassist Patricia Morrison enough to include her on their last finyl release, the 'Death Party' e.p. With the return of Powers and Graham, however, only Rob Ritter is missing from the original line-up. Is the band more of an on-going concern?

"What's an on-going concern?" slurs Jeffrey Lee Pierce.

"It was always these members, we just played in disguises," says Graham helpfully.

"We just got lost in the shuffle," mumbles Kid Congo.

"It's a CLUB!" declares the Blob, "Y'know, some people come, some people go, Everyone's got a card and they can come and go as they wish!"

It's going to be one of THOSE interviews. Inevitably, Pierce decides he wants to talk about drugs: "Y'know, they've found all those qualuudes when they busted the Starwood owner - they found them under a stack of tickets to see us and Top Jimmy." They laugh knowingly. "We were going to give them out at every show. We play real slow, so we wanted to audience to be 'luuded out," he says, barely able to get the words out in his mirth. The Starwood is a dive in LA where the band was once asked to play with the Circle Jerks and the Subhumans.

"They should lump us in more with bands like the Bangles."

Kid Congo laughs goofily.

"Or True West," suggests Graham.

Kid Congo informs us that Tom Verlaine is producing True West, and Jeffrey Lee takes his cue: "Tom Verlaine's got some pretty odd tastes. He likes some pretty terrible bands too. I mean, I like Tom Verlaine, I rip all my licks off of him, but y'know, he's got some pretty bad tastes too - he like the dB's," he concludes contemptuously.

The members of the Club are also not anamored of comparisons with the Birthday Party ("I hate them."). But Pierce's other vice does lend a small degree of credence to those comparisons - religion. Or rather, the darker side of religion - listen to the first album and you'll be forgiven for thinking that his favorite word is 'hell.' And who can forget last year's Gun Club bash at the Commodore, where his skull-and-cross bones trinkets and crucifixes lent more Weight to an already Weighty matter! And, of course, that Haitian voodoo imagery on the cover of that first album indicates an interest which is heartfelt (do self-proclaimed Lucifers of Rock and Roll have hearts? Answers on a postcard to Jim Morrison, C/O Hell). More genuine, at least, than the cheap '60's Hammer horror movie clones that lurk in the Batcave. In England, recently, the Gun Club had the dubious honor of sharing a gig with te ghouls of Alien Sex Fiend.

"Yeah, well I took care of that." Pierce gloats. Their obviously gleeful memories produce much chortling. "We changed 'Ivy' to 'Batcave Assholes.' That was the title of the song, Batcave Assholes. We went on and one and on about how we wished all their would burn off. It's glitter."

"It's just another fad passing through," declares Kid Congo, stating the obvious.

I ask if the Gun Club is more lasting than that, but my question is ignored - Pierce is on a roll as he mimics an election campaign orator: "When Bryan Gregory invented this there was more substance to it!" He laughs loudly at this huge witticism.

Kid Congo takes up the baton, "Everybody out of the Cramps was doing that years ago, they're not doing anything new. Even the Cramps don't do it anymore."

"Bryan Gregory was wearing bones when they first came down to LA," Pierce continues. "They were opening for the Runaways in 1977; He had bones all over him and stuff, an' corsses an' stuff. But he doesn't even have a band now, he can't even get in a band, nobody'll let him in."

Kid Congo reminds us that Gregory had formed Beast, but on the other side of the room the Volcano continues to spout: "They kicked him out. And they went on tour and became very hip with the Batcave Assholes as well - without Bryan Gregory - who invented their whole thing! But, on the other hand, Marc Bolan invented glitter and David Bowie made all the money so ... the innovators are not always the people who get it. I mean there's no room for Debbie Harry in the charts anymore, but the Go-Go's definitely took over her audience quickly, didn't they?"

Does she still deserve that chart presence?

"She's a lot better than the Go-Go's! I mean, the Go-Go's have absconded with her audience! I mean, she wrote lines like "What's your pleasure, a movie or a measure.' That's a lot more intelligent than anything the Go-Go's ever wrote!"

Jeffrey Lee Pierce likes Debbie Harry.

As the conversation devlops it becomes evident that the Blob isn't impressed with a hell of a lot in music today, Bananarama and Siouxie Creature coming in for extended mockery. He has some hysterically funny perceptions of the English as a whole:

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Vinyl

JONATHAN RICHMAN

Jonathan Sings

A friend of mine once saw Jonathan Richman singing *I'm Nature's Mosquito* to ten or fifteen kids in a Pizza Hut in Gloucester Mass. Another friend saw him singing *I'm a Little Dinosaur* while on all fours on a stage in England. A third friend considers listening to J.R. the same as swallowing three quick glasses of mustard and water. Who is this guy who sings like he has a bad head cold?

A few facts: J.R. formed the first Modern Lovers (with Jerry Harrison, later of Talking Heads, David Robinson, later of The Cars, and Ernie Brooks, who went on to The Necessarys) in Boston in 1972. That year, Kim Fowley produced their first LP but no company would release it. In 1974, Warner Brothers (with John Cale at the controls) let them make a second record, but refused to release it. Also that year, Kim Fowley produced a third record, and again it went unreleased. In late 1974, Beserkely finally released the John Cale sessions as a proper LP, and J.R. was on his way.

In 1976, The Sex Pistols recorded a cover of *Roadrunner* with *that* J.R. doing his best to sound like he had a sinus problem. Roadrunner remains Jonathan's best known tune although he rarely performs it live. By 1981, after four more Beserkely albums (best described as "different") and numerous Modern Lover lineups, his music had become less electaic and quite folky. Embarking on a solo career, he cut five albums worth of material with the Paley Brothers (all un-released) and toured extensively. The original Kim Fowley sessions were eventually released on Mohawk Records, and by 1982 J.R. was talking of playing with a band again. By late 1982, he was back with the fourth version of the Modern Lovers, although their touring and recording was sporadic. One show however (from the Lone Star Cafe in NYC), was broadcast in its entirety on CITR (thanks to N.N-H. and R.O. for that one!)

In the fall of 1983, Sire released *Jonathan Sings!* featuring the band from the Lone Star show. Like all previous Modern Lovers, this band can rock, but they always give Jonathan the spotlight.

Whether on upbeat songs like *Give Paris One More Chance* and *Stop This Car*, or on sloer ones such as *Not Yet Three* (sung from the viewpoint of a three year old), the band always lets J.R. get his message across. Every album of his has at least one song that really shows another side of the man's character. On *Jonathan Sings* that song is *The Neighbours*. Would J.R. ever cheat on his true love? No way, besides, he doesn't let the neighbours run his life. If you are looking for modern post-punk industrial depressing sentiments, then songs about about convertibles in the summer and conga drum parties may seem horribly un-1980's. J.R. doesn't wear black, in fact, he rarely wears a shirt! I really doubt there will be another album this year that has Charles Aznavour, front lawns, leatherette car seats, and the funny pages all used as topics within songs.

Lyrically, this LP is like his other six: optimism wrapped around the most ridiculous rhymes put to vinyl. There is no need to describe this music in depth. It is sufficient to note that J.R. remains completely committed to three basic principles: The importance of our youthful years (and where they were spent); Fidelity; and American Rock & Roll. In a world full of Loverboys and Meatloafs, such committments are truly valuable.

Jesse Hubbard

TOM WAITS
Swordfishtrombones

I am personally acquainted with four people who own Tom Waits albums. This figure is worldwide. Ther term "relative obscurity" hardly suffices when describing Tom Waits' ten year recording career.

This past year however, has produced for Waits two film roles *The Outsiders* and *Rumblefish*, an academy award nomination (Soundtrack: *One From the Heart*), a television appearance *David Letterman*, and *Swordfish Trombones*; a album receiving considerab critical acclaim.

Initial playings of *Swordfis Trombones* can leave you w the impression that the albu is a little bare. Further listen ings reveal more depth than is initially apparent.

Waits' power has always been in his lyrics, and here he has stripped away all unnessary dressing to get at their essencel The instrumentation is predominantly acoustic and percussive, lending support rather than overwhelming.

The players are comprised mostly of veteran sessionmen. The only carry-overs from previous albums are Larry Taylor on bass and outstanding jazz percussionist Victor Feldman playing various instruments (no Swordfish Trombone!)

Although there is considerably less humor on the album than on previous ones (notably *Nighthawks at the Diner*, the songs run basically true to form. Waits is generally more playful on uptempo numbers and reveals more of his heart on the slower ones.

Tracks of particular note include the three brief instrumentals; *Dave the Butcher*, *Just Another Sucker on the Vine*, and *Rainbirds*. Each of these pieces effectively set a particular mood within a minimal framework.

The standout track is *Frank's Wild Years* on which Waits gives, over a meandering bass line and cheezy loungeact organ riff, a low key dissertation on his version of the American Dream: "Well Frank settled down in the valley/He sold used office furniture/His wife was a spent piece of used jet trash/Made good Bloody Mary's/Kept her mouth shut most of the time/Had a little Chihuahua named Carlos/That had some kind of skin disease/And was totally blind."

Soldiers Things is a poignant song about a wife selling her dead husband's articles, and *Sixteen Shells From a Thirty Ought Six* is effective for its incessant, driving beat and tahe singsong delivery of the lyrics.

Asylum records, Waits' label of ten years refused to release *Swordfish Trombones*. Given today's musical climate and Waits' previous recordings, how Asylum coulb view the album as unmarketable is inconceivable.

Waits took the album to Island Records, a label more sympathetic to unconventional artists and they promptly released it.

they say (who are they?) sucess generally breeds apathy. I for one (and probably the other four) feel that Tom Waits may be the one person with enough integrity to avoid the trappings that come with fame. If not, there's always Jack Daniels.

Jim Main

MINUTEMEN
Buzz or Howl Under the Influence of Heat

Think about this record title for a minute. What does it all mean? Yes, a bizarre title for sure, But, very appropriate, for the music contained on this piece of vinyl is every bit as bizarre.

Let your mind wander and try to imagine, if you can, a cross between the Talking Heads, the early Gang of Four, and Captain Beefheart, all amalgamated, speeded up and compressed into blinding bursts of amyl-nitrate, you will find yourself, not in the Twilight Zone, but with the sound of the Minutemen..!

Buzz or Howl Under the Influence of Heat is the Minutemen's 3rd EP or LP depending on how you want to lok at it (case in point: their 1st LP contained 18 songs, but clocked in at only a14 minutes, 51 seconds). It's also their most diverse to date, as well as being electrifying and moving as well.

George Hurley on drums plays flashing, inverted jazz-punk signatures. Bass player and main song-writer Mike Watt counterpoints with simple but driving basslines. Darting and weaving comes D. Boon's utterly distinctive guitar with its impetuous patterns. And reflecting his guitar's high-pitched angst, he howls with the voice of a man trying to warn a crowd of drunken disbelievers.

Some of the tracks on this disc which really leaped out and smacked me in the face included *Cut* which features a mysterious, impelling emlody, mysterious, impelling melody, *The Product* cleverly utilizes the structures, rhythmns and melodic forms of jazz and funk, making it very possibly; danceable. But my personal fave would have to be *The Little Man With A Gun In His Hand*. It has a catchy, happy beat to it, with country ahd western influences: Full of emotion and fluid lyrical grace. This song also an anomaly in itself; one of the very few Minutement songs over 3 minutes ever recorded.

Tired of all the robot music coming over from Britain? Then you'll probably want this product of the underground Los Angeles scene. Get it and Buzz (or howl).

Mike Dennis

54-40
Set The Fire

From the smashing chords beginning *Set the Fire*, to the melancholay saxaphone trailing off on *Broken Pieces* - this is a *whole* album.

A whole is equal to the sum of its parts, and in the case of 54/40's 1st full-length, the parts are crisp, finely-tuned pieces of earthy music. The band, too, is a whole, with four mature musicians contributing equally to the success of this album. Brad Merritt's basslines are more unassuming than those on *Selection*, (their previous EP) yet they allow Neil Osborne's electric (and, more significantly, acoustic) guitar to frame the songs more gently than on *Selection*. Darryl Neudorf's drumming and percussion are steady, especially on the brooding *Around the Bend*, when he contributes a rolling 'heart'-beat to compliment Phil Comparelli's airy, pano-like keyboards.

Another primary part of this album is Comparelli's poignant use of the trumpet. On the four tracks this instrument is used, the 54/40 "sound" reaches the same level as the Bunnymen, Teardrop Explodes, and TV21; spinning, trembling, and flying high - the trumpet should be used more often, especially when in the hands of someone like Phil Comparelli. The production aids the clea bell-like sound of the trumpet, as Allen Moy and band did a fine job of mixing and mastering on an album whose very nature demanded clarity and precision.

The album is flawed (nothing is perfect), but these flaws are minor. On *'A Big Ideal'* and *''What to Do Now* the production is below par; the drums sound hollow and tinny, there is a general feeling of confinement on the tracks. The lyrics too, while sung with emotion and insight, are somewhat confining in their opacity, while the sound is free and spacious. Perhaps I'm being picky.

The parts of this album are excellent, and the whole is just as good. Buy it; now.

Jason

KATE BUSH

News and views of this British singer/songwriter compiled by her fans here in North America. For the first issue please send $1.50 to:

Break-Through
Box 160
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Verdict

MIDNIGHT OIL
10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1

Let's get the obligatory hype out of the way first. Midnight Oil are the latest "big new thing" to come from Australia. This album *10987654321* was the top seller there in 1984, outdistancing such noteables as *Thriller* and *Synchronicity*. The single *Power and the Passion* was number one for a couple of months. Peter Garret, the bald six-foot six singer and gang leader is the kind of guy who might've frightened Boris Karloff. He has a law degree and he's an expert at tai-kwan-do (a martial art).

The band played a couple of major beach concerts in the past Australia springtime to crowds in excess of 50,000. Et cetera, et cetera. It's inarguable. These guys are hot down under.

All this means nothing of course. The purpose here is to review the album, not the hype. Fortunately the news is good. *10987654321*, like the single suggests, is a passionate powerhouse. Socio-political rock'n roll with a generous proportion of perception and anger. Imagine a hybrid of the Clash circa *London Calling* and XTX circa *English Settlement*.

Midnight Oil aren't a copycat band though. They take their influences and bend them into a unique sound; arguably more potent than the influences. From the first cut on side one, *Outside World*, a slow, brooding declaration of intent, it's apparent that this band means business. Big business. Midnight Oil *should* make it big. Like the Clash U2, X and a handful of others, they're the kind of band that the world needs. No love songs or vacuous odes to positivism that not even the band understands; *10987654321* reflects the real world. Nuclear nightmares and injustice for all who aren't rich. This is music that matters. Definitely one of the top five albums released in 1983.

Gerald **Bostock**

THE FALL
Perverted By Language

Over this past year, when a band's popularity has been largely determined by how photogenic its members are, how many management representatives it sends to the U.S., or which band its lead singer has fronted before, it's comforting to know that The Fall is still together and recording. When so many of the bands who formed in the late '70's have since changed their musical styles to fit into the British or American charts The Fall is still the band it used to be. Mark Smith has never been featured on an NME color cover, the band has never recorded on a major lable and has been in the Top 20 only in New Zealand. Yet The Fall remains unphased by lack of recognition over their eight-year career, and are releasing some of their best music ever.

Perverted by Language represents the best of The Fall's 1980's output. More accessible than *Live at the Witch Trials* or *A Part of America Therein*, the "primal scream" sound has been pared down to the spare guitar, bass, drums core of songs like *The Classical* from *Hex Enduction Hour*. The tunes are by no means melodic, but no longer are they bogged down in a morass of noise. The sparseness allows us to hear Mark Smith's beat-poetry lyrics - a good thing, because what he has to say is pretty interesting if you take the time to listen. For instance, on *Garden* he sings about seeing God as a country and-western singer on a motorbike. A bizarre outlook perhapsm but few have the audacity to put it on record. Brixe Smith contributes vocals on "Hotel Bloedel"; she's the only new addition to the band since 1981.

Introduce yourself to The Fall if you long for the days of Wire, the old Gang of Four and Cure, and the bands of *Wanna Buy a Bridge*? - this record is a perfect starting point. If you already know The Fall's music, *Perverted by Language* is encouraging reassurance that Mark E. Smith & Co. are still ruffling feathers in this age of peacock pop.

Fifi

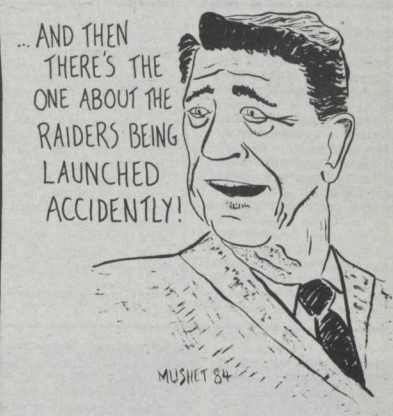
VARIOUS ARTISTS
Afterthought

Ever walked down Fourth Avenue on a Saturday afternoon, and maybe stopped by the Soft Rock or one of the health food spots for an expresso? If so, then maybe you've noticed a few people in corners, perhaps sporting psychedelic scarves, and loing hair, discussing Marxism or granola. Then maybe you've wondered where they come from and what they're doing here in 1984?

Believe it or not, these "hippies" are the only remnants of the once thriving "Psychedelic Experience" era that took place in Vancouver during 1966-72. "Afterthoughts"), the third volume of Vancouver's History of Rock and Roll offers some insight into the diverse tal ents in Vancouver at the time.

The first side opens with a raunchy song called "My Home Town" by the Seeds of Time. The Seeds were known as the bad boys of Vancouver, and there are endless numbers of stories told of their antics. At one time, they were wanted by the Vancouver police, were kicked out of the musician's union for "bad behavior", and were banned from the entire city of Calgary altogether. ("My Home Town") has a basic, garage guitar sort of sound. "Crying the Blues" is slowed down a bit but uses a lively piano in the background.

By far the rawest and liveliest band on the compilation however is "The Painted Ship. Included in the "60's punk" compilation album PEBBLES as well, they live up to this generic descripti0n. The third song "Little White Lies" practically jumps off the turntable. Singer Bill Hay spits the words out, using a style best described as snarling rather than singing. The B-side "Frustration" with its dominant bass line has overtones of the Velvet Underground's early material in it. After the band released this



Quotes of the Month

Coach Flores, I've just got a call from Moscow. They think Marcus Allen (La Raiders running back) is a new secret weapon and they insist that we dismantle him immediately ... Y'know the Russians have given me an idea. You give me your team and we'll put them in silos. Then we won't have to build the MX missle. (Ronald Reagan, aspiring stand-up comic and American president, attempting to congratulate La Raiders coach Tom Flores on his team's Super Bowl victory without making a complete ass of himself. You be the Judge.)

"I can only use a little hairspray tonight, cos I've got to use the whole can for Nina Hagen on Monday night" -- (Overheard in the ladies room of the Railway Club during Green on Red show Jan. 20)

"There is no way I'll vote for a punk rocker" -- Unidentified UBC student commenting on the candidacy of Ian Weininger in the student society executive elections. Mr. Weininger sports a Mohawk.

4TH ANNUAL 'TRIBUTE TO WEST COAST MUSIC'

canadian academy of recording arts and sciences

- **A space has been provided in each section for those wishing to vote for an artist not named on the ballot.**
- Please check off, or write in **one name only** in each section.
- Your vote must be for **B.C. artists only**.
- All ballots must be signed, and returned by mail to the address below by **Feb. 28, 1984.**

Group of the Year
☐ D.O.A.
☐ Doug & The Slugs
☐ Headpins
☐ Images In Vogue
☐ Payola$
☐ .....

Album/EP of the Year
☐ Enigmas EP *(Enigmas)*
☐ Hammer On A Drum *(Payola$)*
☐ Images In Vogue *(Images In Vogue)*
☐ Line of Fire *(Headpins)*
☐ The Phil Smith Album *(Phil Smith/Various Artists)*
☐ .....

Song of the Year
☐ Hash Assassin *(Actionauts)*
☐ Just One More Time *(Headpins)*
☐ Lust For Love *(Images In Vogue)*
☐ Never Said I Loved You *(Payola$)*
☐ Where Is This Love *(Payola$)*
☐ .....

Note: **Bryan Adams, Chilliwack** and **Loverboy** will be receiving **International Achievement Awards**, and therefore are not eligible in the five categories open to public voting.

Independent Release of the Year
☐ Bloodied But Unbowed *(D.O.A.)*
☐ C'est La Vie *(Maurice & The Cliches)*
☐ Enigmas EP *(Enigmas)*
☐ Hash Assassin/Vagabond *(Actionauts)*
☐ The Phil Smith Album *(Phil Smith/Various Artists)*
☐ .....

Club Act of the Year
☐ b-Sides
☐ Beverly Sisters
☐ Jim Byrnes
☐ Enigmas
☐ David Raven
☐ .....

Signature .....

Mail Ballots to: CARAS-BC BALLOTS
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V6Z 1H7

- Presentations take place on **Sunday, March 4th,** at the Westin Bayshore Inn. No voting results available before then.
- Ticket info: VTC/CBO. 280-4411.

Gun Club continued from page 3

"They're very, very repressed people. They have hardly any customs and they can hardly get any drugs into the country at all, and so these people have to go terribly straight their whole lives. They've got very terrible sexual mores - I think if someone had to have an abortion it would be a fate worse than death in England, or at least you would definitely be looked down and scorned upon all through the country. So they can't have sex and they can't take drugs so they just go crazy, they just hate everything, that's why they're anarchists. I mean, what other emotion is left? It's stuck up, man. I tell you, you go live there for a while, you'd be happy to be back."

Oh veah?

"I think it's a lot more fun over here - you can do whatever you want. They do a lot of drinking over there though, that's one thing they do, they sure do drink a lot. But it's too gloomy. Everybody's frowning, everybody's sad all the time. Everybody's crabby, you get in fights with the telephone operators."

"T.V.'s only on 'til eleven," Kid Congo laments. "Yeah, that's a *shame*," says Graham with genuine pity.

"And the last thing they do at a quarter to eleven (in the pubs) is yell at you (for last call).

Jeffrey Lee Pierce doesn't like England.

We didn't, however, get to hear 'Batcave Assholes' at the Commodore that evening. We got 'For the Love of Jesus' instead, a high point in a loose, patchy, trashy, yet on the whole highly enjoyable gig. Pierce, the Moses from Hell, made up words, forgot some words and generally showed us why you shouldn't sing when you have a fever. But I enjoy a band that upsets people's finer sensibilities by disregarding the etiquette of live concerts. From the unexpected opening of 'Lost Highway' through searing versions of 'Preaching the Blues' and 'Death Party' to the ten minute extended/dub/disco encore of John Coltrane's 'Love Supreme,' the band had FUN! Kid Congo, oozing more cool sensuality than Patricia Morrison could ever muster in a bride-of-Dracula bikini (sorry Gord), showed what a creative guitarist he is by extracting some gratingly exquisite sound from his instrument; for the saying 'Fuck Art, Let's Dance!' he reads 'Fuck Virtuosity, Let's Make a Noise!'

My feelings exactly.

(For the whole interview, listen to Hi-Profile, February 11th.)

MORE VINYL CONTINUED

single, Hay remembers with amusement that they were urged to produce something "more commercial" by the record companies.

Other bands on the album include "The Self Portrait" (who sound more like the Beatles than anything else), "The Collectors" (encore plus de psychedelia), and a humorour group called "Orville Dorp" who seem to be too stoned to take anything seriouslu. All in all, the album is an interesting cross section of some of Vancouver's musical roots. If listened to repeatedly however, one starts to feel like hanging around on Fourth Avenue and trying to find one's karma.

Rob Handfield

THE THREE FACES OF NINA. . . . . as interchangeable as her character

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Japanese Fashions

Japan's youth have accepted western styles of music and clothing with fervor. Mickey Mouse T-shirts were really big and when Rockabilly arrived so did 1950 America. Japan has been lapping up anything from America or Europe and begging for more - until recently.

The tide has turned; the fashion scene in Japan has begun to quiver with new, young designers. Europe is beginning to pick up on Issey Miyake, Ykiko Hanai, Hiroko Koshino, and Kensai Yamamoto. These designers are turning out clothing that is a mix of dance fashion, London punk and traditional Japan.

The trend is toward loosek draped but structured forms. Huge, boxy tops with loose, wide skirts or pants are typical of the new fashions. Cloth wrapped around the waist or in the hair add texture to the smooth, firm fabrics. Colors are sombre; black, mustard yellow, grey, white and some earth tones. Very little patterning is used; the preference seems to be for expanses of single colors in harsh, bleak tones. They are clothes fit for a technological age, romantic in a dark, perverse way.

If you've ever seen pictures of the Japanese Noh drama, you'll have some idea of the face to go with the clothes. Bright slices of color; red, yellow and pink on and around the eyes, purple stripe along one or both cheeks, and gold, black, or blue lips over the regulation pale face. the rule is, any neon color, anywhere.

Where does one get the latest? Vogue has some Issey Miyake patterns out, if you can sew. Holt Renfrew is beginning to dabble, but to afford the prices, you have to win the Lottery. Eaton's had a few middle-of-the-road items in stock when I checked - but the only place I've foumd to get straight-from-Japan clothes is a little store on Robson street, across from Eaton's, called Front First. The really new, innovative stuff goes as soon as it comes in, but the buyer goes to Japan every two to three months and I was told to check in at the end of February for the next shipment.

Ta Ta Darlings H.P.R.

Jackson's Thriller not terribly. . . .

This is to be a review of sorts, of the Michael Jackson video *Thriller*. Although, by now it is not exactly new, it probably still worth looking at.

Before I actually deal with *Thriller* I intend to digress somewhat, to give context to the aspect of the video I would like to deal with. There is a trend in rock music/video to treat women not only as chattels but as objects of violence. The war of the sexes is the scene today and its message is violence and domination, possession and territory. It sort of smacks of the cold war except that the cold war of the moment is less violent. There is no great knowledge of music needed to find this message, from the Police's *Every Breath You Take* to Bryan Adans' *Cuts Like A Knife* the battle lines are clearly drawn.

Bryan Adans is a good springboard into the video world, he is the protege of Bruce Allen a good-ole-boy with a propensity toward violent acts and screaming matches, and at the moment is probably Vancouver's hottest musical export. I have seen two of his videos and, apart from the banality of the lyrics and the pedestrian filming, found them quite disturbing. In *Cuts Like a Knife* Adams plays with a knife while a young woman changes into her swimsuit behind a screen. There are one or two close-ups of the knife interposed between shots of her changing and, as the band plays on in an empty pool, she slimbs the high board and dives, presumably to her death. The threat implied by the knife is readily apparent as Adams uses it to punctuate his lyrics by stabbing it into a board. The other Video is, if anything worse. Spouting lyrics like *This time I'm going to make it alright, This time she'll never get away* it portrays Adams stalking a young womant through a deserted barn. He is joined at one point by the other band members who, with the threatening swagger of 'real men', fall in behind him on his pursuit. A real clever twist at the end shows that it was just a dream; Bryan gets off the bed he was lying on, grabs his helmet, mounts his charger, and roars off into the sunset to meet his loved one. Lucky girl, this time he's going to make it alright.

It is a quantum leap from Bryan Adams to Braineater Jim Cummins but women do not fair much better at the hands of this 'alternate' artist and musician. His portrayals of women are usually as vamps or in macabre, horror-show positions of subjugation. Jim Cummins is considered by many to be *the* artiste of the Vancouver punk scene and while, as an artist, he is perhaps merely reflecting the oppression of women in society, it is equally possible it is a reflexive exploitation of a trend that, unfortunatelty, seems to traverse the rock and roll apwxreum. I'd like to tive him the benefit of the doubt, but find it difficult.

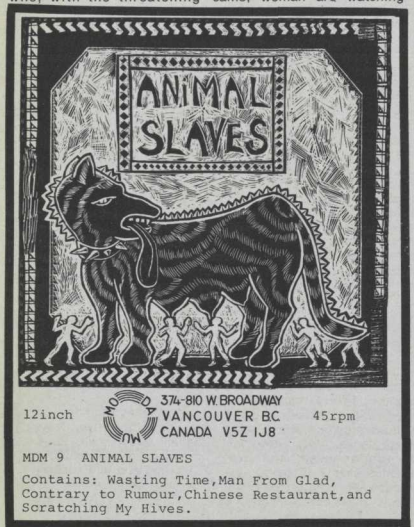
So *now* to Michael Jackson, from Braineater to the flesh-eating antics of *Thriller*. Fore

For those who have not seen the video I'd like to give a short synopsis. It's a thirteen minute semi-story centered around the sond *Thriller* and directed by John Landis of *American Werewolf in London* The video opens with Jackson and a young women nurse stopping in the woods for a romantic, moonlight stroll. As they walk he proposes to her but, he warns her, *I'm not like other guys*. She laughs until the full moon shines on him and his transformation into werewolf begins. At this point I would like to mention hat the woman is an accomplished acress, at least as far as portrayalas of terror go. Anyhow, after a short chase, the werewolf catches up to her and just as the mutilation is about to begin we cut to a movie theatre where Michael and another, or perhaps the same, woman are watching the above mentioned scene. She is horrified by what is taking placeon the screen but Michael is enthralled and merrily eating popcorn. Finally she can take it no longer and she leaves, he amusedly gets up and follows her out of the theatre. Outside he soon has her smiling again and the two cheerfully dance off down the street. But, as they pass the graveyard the corpses begin to stir and before they get much farther they are confronted by the rotting throng of undead. They are both frightened and slowly being backed into a corner when the woman turns her head for a moment, when she looks back Michael has joined the corpses. After some dance routines she is persued into a haunted house. Once again the woman's terror is very realistically portrayed and the fiolence of the pursuit, while obviously surreal (fists smashing up through the floorboards and etc.), is effective. Michael bursts his way into the room she is in and, as she cowers on the couch, reaches down and touches her. She looks up into the smiling face of a normal, cute, Michael Jackson. ''Hey,'' he says. ''It's alright.'' She smiles back, albeit a little shakily, and they start to leave. Jackson looks to the camera which zooms in on the freeze-frame to show his cat-eyes. The beast still lurks within.

So what? It's just a typical horror movie plot with a slight rock video twist.

But I don't think so. While I'm sure, almost, that Michael Jackson doesn't intend to imply that any man is capable of turning into a violent, destructive animal whose sole aim is to mutilate/rape women, that is the message I receive. I think one of the reasons I tend to interpret this in such a paranoid way is due to the context of the piece, namely the rock video scene. The rape fantasies of Bryan Adams, or whoever is responsible for the content of his videos, are not subtle and fairly obvious. However, with Michael Jackson there is a degree of sophistication that tends to obscure the content of this particular piece of entertainment. Again, I do not think this is a deliberate attempt to exploit rape fantasies, but simply an expression of Michael Jackson's perceptive creative response to the present pop scene. He knows, obviously better than most, what sells musically and visually and artistically, and he responds to this demand. A lot more people watch, listen, and learn, from him than do from Bryan Adans, and unfortunately, with Michael Jackson's wholesome form of androgynous sexuality, it is hard to see past the innocence But the message *is* being delivered; love is war, sex is violence, and you've got to be cruel to be cool.

Gordon Inglis



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Top 50

1. DOA
2. The The
3. Iggy Pop [& the Stooges]
4. Nina Hagen
5. X
6. Jonathan Richman & the Modern Lovers
7. The Cramps
8. Brian Eno
9. Talking Heads
10. The Cure
11. Echo & the Bunnymen
12. David Bowie
13. The Fall
14. Dead Kennedys
15. 54/40
16. Gun Club
17. Lou Reed
18. Bill Nelson
19. Fleshtones
20. Simple Minds
21. Gang of Four
22. Stranglers
23. Trevor Jones
24. Yello
25. The Clash
26. Bauhaus
27. I, Braineater
28. Elvis Costello
29. Slouxsie & the Banshees
30. Adrian Belew
31. Magazine
32. New Order
33. Grandmaster Flash & MELLE Mel
34. R. Greenfield & J.J. Burnel
35. Peter Gabriel
36. Wall of Voodoo
37. The Smiths
38. Herbie Hancock
39. PIL
40. Cabaret Voltaire
41. Joy Division
42. XTC
43. John Cale
44. Bill Laswell
45. Red Guitars
47. The Alarm
48. Death Cult
49. Shriekback
50 Tom Waits

For the second month in a row DOA have managed to grab top spot in this music chart.

Joey Shithead must be papering his walls with this rag, or at least dropping off bundles at the homes of record company executives. Seriously though, this chart clearly shows how any bands appeal can vary from one month to another; PIL dropped 37 spots; XTC fell be 23, and House of Commons plummetted 38. Meanwhile, Gun Club rose 35 4anks, Bill Nelson came up 37, 54/40 improved by 36 spots, and Jonathan Richman rose an amazing 48!

Reasons for some of these improvements include: *local gigs* (or rumors of such) which brought up the stock of Nina Hagen, X, Gun Club, and The Cramps; *New Albums*, Bill Nelson, The Fall, Jonathan Richman, 54-40, Greenfield and Burnel to name a few.

Notice the abundant local talent here: DOA, 54/40, Trevor Jones, I, Braineater, and House of Commons. Lotusland has spawned many bands that we can be proud of, so support them. In other words, buy their records and go to their shows so that they don't shrivel up and die of neglect like so many great local bands of the past. If any of these names seem unfamiliar, try tuning in to FM 102 more often, or call us at 228-CITR'

...we'll see what we can do.

Jason Grant

Program Features

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
7							
8	MUSIC OF OUR TIME	WAKE-UP REPORT 8 AM					
9		PUBLIC AFFAIRS 9 AM					
10		BREAKFAST REPORT 10 AM					FOLK INTER NATIONAL
11							
12	NEWS SUNDAY BRUNCH						NEWS
1	THE ROCKERS SHOW	LUNCH REPORT 1 PM					
2							
3	RABBLE WITHOUT A PAUSE	NEWSBREAK 3:30 PM					THE PLAYLIST SHOW
4		SPORTSBREAK 4:30 PM					
5							
6	SUNDAY MAGAZINE	DINNER REPORT 6 PM					SATURDAY MAGAZINE
7							
8	SUNDAY NIGHT LIVE	HIGH PROFILE 8 PM					
9							
10	FAST FORWARD	JAZZ SHOW					
11			FINAL VINYL 11 PM				#1 PLAYLIST
12	FAST FORWARD	JAZZ SHOW					
1	LIFE AFTER BED	LATE NITE			PLACEBO RADIO	AFTER HOURS	RANDOM INSOMNIA
2							
3							